DIVERSITY RECEIVER IN A CDMA CELLULAR TELEPHONE SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

I. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to cellular telephone systems. More specifically, the present invention relates to a novel and improved receiver design for enhancing the reliability and communications in the cellular telephone environment.

II. Description of the Related Art

The use of code division multiple access (CDMA) modulation techniques is one of several techniques for facilitating communications in which a large number of system users are present. Although other techniques such as time division multiple access (TDMA), frequency division multiple access (FDMA) and AM modulation schemes such as amplitude companded single sideband (ACSSB) are known, CDMA has significant advantages over these other techniques. The use of CDMA techniques in a multiple access communication system is disclosed in U.S. Patent application Ser. No. 06/921,261, filed Oct. 17, 1986, entitled "SPREAD SPECTRUM MULTIPLE ACCESS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM USING SATELLITE OR TERRESTRIAL REPEATERS", now U.S. Pat. No. 4,901,307 assigned to the assignee of the present invention, the disclosure thereof incorporated by reference.

In the just mentioned patent, a multiple access technique is disclosed where a large number of mobile telephone system users each having a transceiver communicate through satellite repeaters or terrestrial base stations (also known as cell-sites stations, or for short cell-sites) using code division multiple access (CDMA) spread spectrum communication signals. In using CDMA communications, the frequency spectrum can be reused multiple times thus permitting an increase in system user capacity. The use of CDMA results in a much higher spectral efficiency than can be achieved using other multiple access techniques. In a CDMA system, increases in system capacity may be realized by controlling the transmitter power of each mobile user so as to reduce interference to other system users.

In the satellite application of the CDMA communication techniques, the mobile unit transceiver measures the power level of a signal received via a satellite repeater. Using this power measurement, along with knowledge of the satellite transponder downlink transmit power level and the sensitivity of the mobile unit receiver, the mobile unit transceiver can estimate the path loss of the channel between the mobile unit and the satellite. The mobile unit transceiver then determines the appropriate transmitter power to be used for signal transmissions between the mobile unit and the satellite, taking into account the path loss measurement, the transmitted data rate and the satellite receiver sensitivity.

The signals transmitted by the mobile unit to the satellite are relayed by the satellite to a Hub control system earth station. The Hub measures the received signal power from signals transmitted by each active mobile unit transceiver. The Hub then determines the deviation in the received power level from that which is necessary to maintain the desired communications. Preferably the desired power level is a minimum power level necessary to maintain quality communications so as to result in a reduction in system interference.

The Hub then transmits a power control command signal to each mobile user so as to adjust or "fine tune" the transmit power of the mobile unit. This command signal is used by the mobile unit to change the transmit power level closer to a minimum level required to maintain the desired communications. As channel conditions change, typically due to motion of the mobile unit, both the mobile unit receiver power measurement and the power control feedback from the Hub continually readjust the transmit power level so as to maintain a proper power level. The power control feedback from the Hub is generally quite slow due to round trip delays through the satellite requiring approximately ½ of a second of propagation time.

One important difference between satellite or terrestrial base stations systems are the relative distances separating the mobile units and the satellite or cell-site. Another important different in the satellite versus the terrestrial system is the type of fading that occurs in these channels. Thus, these differences require various refinements in the approach to system power control for the terrestrial system.

In the satellite/mobile unit channel, i.e. the satellite channel, the satellite repeaters are normally located in a geosynchronous earth orbit. As such, the mobile units are all at approximately the same distance from the satellite repeaters and therefore experience nearly the same propagation loss. Furthermore, the satellite channel has a propagation loss characteristic that follows approximately the inverse square law, i.e. the propagation loss is inversely proportional to the square of the distance between the mobile unit and the satellite repeater in use. Accordingly, in the satellite channel the variation in path loss due to distance variation is typically on the order of only 1-2 dB.

In contrast to the satellite channel, the terrestrial/mobile unit channel, i.e. the terrestrial channel, the distance between the mobile units and the cell sites can vary considerably. For example, one mobile unit may be located at a distance of five miles from the cell site while another mobile unit may be located only a few feet away. The variation in distance may exceed a factor of one hundred to one. The terrestrial channel experiences a propagation loss characteristic as did the satellite channel. However, in the terrestrial channel the propagation loss characteristic corresponds to an inverse fourth-power law, i.e. the path loss is proportional to the inverse of the path distance raised to the fourth power. Accordingly, path loss variations may be encountered which are on the order of over 80 dB in a cell having a radius of five miles.

The satellite channel typically experiences fading that is characterized as Rician. Accordingly the received signal consists of a direct component summed with a multiply reflected component having Rayleigh fading statistics. The power ratio between the direct and reflected component is typically on the order of 6-10 dB, depending upon the characteristics of the mobile unit antenna and the environment about the mobile unit.

Contrasting the satellite channel with the terrestrial channel, the terrestrial channel experiences signal fading that typically consists of the Rayleigh faded component without a direct component. Thus, the terrestrial channel presents a more severe fading environment than the satellite channel where Rician fading is the dominant fading characteristic.